Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador and Myanmar. The issue of energy cooperation has also been taken up with countries like China, Japan, Korea, Russia, Central Asian countries, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Mauritius, Mozambique, etc. To secure a long-term, cost-effective and secure mode of gas transfer from Iran, India has committed itself to Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline Project. We have also formally conveyed India's interest in joining the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project (TAP). Moreover, MEA has facilitated the entry of Indian energy companies in the markets of Latin America for acquisition of oil fields and sourcing of crude oil from Mexico, Venezuela and Ecuador.

In order to enhance energy security of the country, Government are encouraging Oil PSUs to pursue aggressively, equity opportunities in the oil and gas sector overseas. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) has so far made an investment commitment of over US $ 5 billion and had an oil and gas production of 6.6 MMT (Oil and oil equivalent gas) from properties abroad during 2005-06. Oil PSUs now have a presence in 18 countries.

To strengthen energy security, India has also been holding talks with Nepal on specific hydropower projects. In the same sector, our cooperation with Bhutan has been mutually beneficial.

Possibilities of cooperation in the non-conventional energy front are also being explored. Text of a bilateral civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement has been finalised with the USA. An Agreement has been signed with Brazil for Cooperation in Fuel Ethanol and Bio-fuel and with Thailand for cooperation in the field of renewable energy.

The New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) provides an international class fiscal and contract framework for Exploration and Production of Hydrocarbons in India. In addition, in order to give impetus to the exploration and production of Coal Bed Methane (CBM), an environment friendly clean fuel similar to Natural Gas, Government has since formulated a CBM policy. India is also exploring opportunities for cooperation with other countries, in new areas of energy, such as International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, Future Gen Clean Coal Initiative, Integrated Ocean Development Programme for gas hydrates, etc.

World Hindi Conference

†2522. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) up to which categories of the officers of Indian embassies situated in various countries, participated in World Hindi Conference organized recently in the United States of America and the names of such countries together with the details thereof;

(b) the achievements of the above conference;

(c) the extent to which Hindi is used in correspondence, Indian Embassies notification and forms etc., by the Indian Embassies in various countries; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether Government would ensure that the diplomats and officers going abroad from India and the Indian Embassies deliver their speeches in Hindi itself on formal occasions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) Besides the officers and staff of Consulate General of India, New York, Embassy of India, Washington and Permanent Mission of India, New York who were closely involved in the organisation of the Conference, the Indian Ambassador in Washington, Permanent Representative of India in New York and the Consul General of lndia participated in the World Hindi Conference.

(b) About 850 delegates participated in the conference.. These included Hindi authors, scholars, teachers, journalists, representatives of Hindi organisations etc. from India, USA and a number of other countries. Discussions on various aspects of Hindi language and literature were held during 9 Academic Sessions. The outcome of the conference was included in the Declaration of the World Hindi Conference a copy of which is attached as Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Officers in Indian Missions abroad use Hindi in their official work to the maximum extent possible, given the local circumstances. This includes delivering speeches in Hindi on National Days and other occasions.

Statement

Declaration of the World Hindi Conference

The 8th World Hindi Conference was held from 13-15 July, 2007 in New York. The inaugural ceremony of the Conference was held at the United Nations Headquarters. Inauguration of the 8th World Hindi Conference for the first time ever in the Conference Hall of the United Nations Organisation was a historic achievement for Hindi lovers all over the world.

Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations addressed the Inaugural session of the Conference. This in itself was an important achievement.

The Conference welcomes the resolve to make Hindi, already a language spoken in many countries, an official language of the United Nations as mentioned in the audio-visual address of the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh at the inauguration.

The conference also welcomes the suggestion made by the Prime Minister that Hindi writings of Indians living abroad should also be included in the Hindi syllabus and standard Hindi curriculum should be developed for teaching Hindi in other countries.

The conference also welcomes the call made by the Prime Minister to develop good Hindi software, hardware and search engines in order to make Hindi a powerful language of the internet and also the need to honour and respect those engaged in the field of Hindi both in India and abroad.

While welcoming the message of the Prime Minister, the conference urges the Government of lndia to launch a Government-authorised campaign to mobilize support of the majority of the member-nations of the United Nations and take all

possible steps to ensure that Hindi is recognized as one of the official languages of the UN. NRI Organisations abroad should also make an effort to get the support of the Governments of their respective country.

In addition, as a result of the discussions and deliberations held during the 8th World Hindi Conference, the following is proposed:

1. In order to popularize teaching of Hindi and Devnagari script, a standardized syllabus be prepared for teaching Hindi as a second language and a system be evolved to recognise Hindi teachers.

2. To ensure active and purposeful functioning of the World Hindi Secretariat, the Governments of India and Mauritius should extend all possible administrative and financial assistance to the Secretariat and should consider setting up of regional offices of the Secretariat in Delhi and in 4-5 other countries. The Conference calls upon the Secretariat to develop a website on ''Viswa Manch Per Hindi'' in order to popularize Hindi.

3. Simple and good books in Hindi on science, technology and technical subjects should be encouraged. Effective measures be taken to popularize information technology in Hindi. A system based on universally recognized Unicode be developed and made available to all.

4. Database of foreign universities and schools where Hindi is taught be prepared. A list of Hindi teachers should also be prepared.

5. The Conference calls upon the Hindi lovers of the world, especially non-resident Indians and Indian nationals working abroad to assist in promotion and propagation of Hindi language and literature abroad.

6. Arrangement for research scholarship be made for foreign Hindi scholars at the Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyala, Wardha.

7. Kendriya Hindi Sansthan should also contribute actively in promotion of Hindi abroad and preparation of Hindi syllabus.

8. Setting up of Hindi chairs in foreign university be considered.

9. In addition to being a language of literature, Hindi should also be used as a language of modem science and commerce.

10. India should encourage use of Hindi at National and International level symposia and conferences.

Indian industrialists in Nepal

†2523. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indian industrialists living in Nepal and people of Indian origin working there are being threatened for money extortion and to flee from Nepal;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.